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DE RUEHNE #1318 1761138
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 251138Z JUN 09
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO IMMEDIATE 1854
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7127
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 7802
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 6568
RUEHNY/AMEMBASSY OSLO 0373
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 6405
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 8439
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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: INDIA WELCOMES SRI LANKAN DELEGATION, PROGRESS ON
AID FOR TAMILS

¶1. (U) Senior Adviser to the Sri Lankan President Basil Rajapaksa and his brother, Sri Lankan Defense Secretary Gothbaya Rajapaksa, met with Indian External Affairs Minister Krishna in Delhi on June 24. They discussed the resettlement and rehabilitation of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) and agreed on an arrangement for the delivery of humanitarian aid supplies to displaced Tamils in Sri Lanka (septel).

¶2. (U) Following the meeting with the Sri Lankan delegation, Foreign Minister Krishna announced it had accepted his suggestion to receive an aid shipment for internally displaced Tamils in Sri Lanka via the Indian Red Cross. The vessel, carrying 900 tons of food and medicine, had been turned away earlier this month by the Sri Lankan Navy, supposedly for violating internationally accepted formalities followed by merchant ships. According to press reports, Sri Lankan officials suspected Mercy Mission -- the U.K.-based Tamil group responsible for the shipment -- was trying to help the Tamil Tiger rebels. Some press reports have credited the breakthrough to Krishna's diplomacy; according to BBC News, Colombo agreed to accept the aid shipment as a humanitarian gesture "thanks to high-level talks in Delhi."

¶3. (SBU) During a meeting with the Charge on June 25, Foreign Secretary Menon confirmed Krishna's announcement that Sri Lanka had agreed to accept the shipment, explaining that the arrangement was a complicated one: the aid shipment will be unloaded in Chennai where it will be received by the Indian Red Cross, which will then arrange to ship the supplies back to Colombo.

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